Minimum requirements on maximum daily and weekly driving times, minimum breaks and daily and weekly rest periods; positioning by means of tachographs

2017/0122(COD) - 10/06/2020 - Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading

The Committee on Transport and Tourism adopted the recommendation for second reading contained in the report by Henna VIRKUNNEN (EPP, FI) on the Council position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 561 /2006 as regards minimum requirements on maximum daily and weekly driving times, minimum breaks and daily and weekly rest periods and Regulation (EU) No 165/2014 as regards positioning by means of tachographs.

The committee responsible recommended that the European Parliament approve the Council's position at first reading without amendment.

The Council's position at first reading is in line with the provisional agreement reached in the interinstitutional negotiations. The overall agreement reached by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission is aimed at improving the existing social and internal market rules in the field of road transport. In particular, the following was agreed:

Organisation of weekly rest periods

The Agreement allows greater flexibility in the field of long-distance freight transport, while ensuring that drivers return regularly to their place of residence to take a long rest period. The possibility to derogate from the existing rule allowing a reduced weekly rest period every two weeks is only provided for as an exception. It is limited to drivers engaged in international haulage activities and under certain conditions.

Regular return of the driver

Undertakings shall organise the work of drivers in such a way that they are able to return to their employer’s operational centre where they are normally based or to their place of residence within each period of four consecutive weeks. The interval is reduced to three weeks when a driver has taken two consecutive reduced weekly rest periods.

Driving time in exceptional circumstances

In exceptional circumstances, drivers could exceed the daily and weekly driving time by a maximum of one hour, or by a maximum of two hours, provided that they have observed an uninterrupted break of 30 minutes immediately before the additional driving time in order to reach the employer's operational centre or place of residence.

Banning of rest inside the vehicle

The Agreement confirms the banning of regular weekly rest periods inside the vehicle. With a view to ensuring appropriate rest conditions for drivers, the Commission shall be responsible for drawing up detailed provisions concerning the safety and security of parking areas.

Application to light commercial vehicles

The Agreement includes operators of light commercial vehicles over 2 tonnes within the scope of the Regulation. As this requirement only concerns vehicles for professional use and carrying out international transport operations, it shall apply to operations for which fair conditions are required.

Smart tachographs

The Agreement introduces a new generation of ‘smart’ tachographs for more precise positioning of vehicles used for cross-border transport operations, to ensure proper enforcement of compliance with social and internal market rules. A schedule is provided for both the new vehicles and the existing fleet.